

training and confidence necessary to enable them to take their rightful place in the economy.

However, until the passage of Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act in 1975 and later the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, opportunities in the workplace were limited and often resulted in placement in sheltered workshops.

#### MAINSTREAM OPPORTUNITIES

However, with advances in technology and the shortage of qualified workers, new mainstream work opportunities are becoming more available for persons with disabilities.

When the Work Incentives Improvement Act (WIIA) was signed into law on Dec. 17, another impediment was removed in addressing the nation's efforts to encourage people with severe disabilities to go to work.

Nationally, there are, according to the General Accounting Office, about 2.5 million people with disabilities receiving Social Security benefits under both Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) who could possibly benefit from WIIA. (This population represents about 27 percent of the total number of individuals who are eligible to access the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.)

WIIA's assurance of the continued availability of health insurance, under both Medicaid and Medicare, for SSI and SSDI recipients, will remove a formidable barrier to their employment. Public vocational rehabilitation counselors assess the skills and interests of people with disabilities, help them develop individualized plans for employment, and purchase or arrange for the services or training they need to become qualified for jobs.

#### 225,000 PEOPLE HELPED

This program can provide any reasonable and necessary services to help individuals with disabilities get ready for real work. Last year, the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program helped 225,000 people with disabilities across America enter the work force.

In Massachusetts, the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program, through the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, helped 4,800 individuals with disabilities go to work in 1999. Federal funding for vocational rehabilitation was \$2.4 billion in 1999. The states matched those federal funds with \$600 million of their own, resulting in a \$3 billion national Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The distribution formula of federal funds to the states is based upon the population and per capita income of each state.

The \$3 billion spent nationally on vocational rehabilitation services produces \$2.6 billion in employee earnings and \$850 million in state and federal revenues during a single year of employment alone. This is an incredible return-on-investment in light of the fact that those earnings continue for years without the expenditure of additional vocational rehabilitation dollars.

#### A 5-TO-1 RETURN ON THE DOLLAR

The Social Security Administration reports that each dollar spent for the vocational rehabilitation of SSA recipients results in \$5 in savings to the Trust Fund and treasury. The 225,000 individuals with disabilities employed last year will continue to earn real wages and pay state and federal taxes far in excess of the investment made in their employment future by the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Despite the extraordinary success of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program, half of the states restrict the number of peo-

ple with disabilities served due to a lack of funds. It is estimated that an additional \$600 million in federal monies, plus the state match of \$120 million, would eliminate waiting lists in every state and help another 54,000 people with disabilities go to work.

Additional public vocational rehabilitation services and the guarantee of medical coverage under the WIIA would significantly reduce the unacceptably high rate of unemployment among people with disabilities.

According to statistics compiled by the GAO, it is estimated that between 15 million and 20 million Americans have health-related work limitations. Each year the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program serves 1.2 million people with disabilities who want to work.

#### HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

A recent Harris survey indicates that 71 percent of working-age Americans with disabilities are unemployed and of that number, 72 percent want to work.

However, 42 percent of working-age Americans with disabilities believe that they are too disabled to work. The highly qualified, professional vocational rehabilitation counselors of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program work with individuals with significant disabilities to help them recognize that it is possible for even the most significantly disabled individuals to increase their economic and personal independence through work.

The passage of WIIA and the guarantee of continued health insurance coverage for Social Security recipients makes work a realistic goal for many more people with significant disabilities.

A recently completed seven-year study by the Research Triangle Institute, confirmed once again the success of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program by showing that it is highly effective in placing people with disabilities into productive jobs. No other federal or state program has received this type of scrutiny and measured up to such a high level of successful outcomes.

#### INDEPENDENT LIVES

It proved once again that the federal/state effort to improve the lives of persons with disabilities by allowing them to live independent and productive lives is on the right track.

In particular, the study shows that:

- Graduates of Public VR worked an average of 35 hours per week and earned an average of \$7.35 per hour;
- 37.5 percent of the graduates earned more than \$7 per hour;
- 78.4 percent of graduates work in professional, managerial, technical, clerical, sales or service jobs;
- 85 percent of graduates were working in the same or other job one year after graduation;
- 67.6 percent of graduates were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs;
- 67.1 percent of graduates were satisfied or very satisfied the opportunity for advancement with their jobs;
- 61.5 percent of graduates were satisfied with fringe benefits with their jobs.

The number of hours worked by consumers, the wages they earned, and their satisfaction with jobs and working conditions are all strong endorsements of the efficacy of the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Clearly, the Rehabilitation Act, and the ADA have helped to create a societal expectation that people with disabilities can and should have the opportunity to work. Now,

WIIA provides for the health care supports essential to individuals with disabilities who want to work. Adequate funding of the public vocational Rehabilitation Program will help thousands more people with disabilities obtain good jobs.

The administration and Congress will demonstrate fiscal responsibility and a wise investment in the human resources of our nation by adequately funding Public Vocational Rehabilitation in the federal year 2001.

The American economy needs workers, people with disabilities need work opportunities, and the federal treasury needs more taxpayers. The Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program pays for itself many times over in taxes and human potential realized.

#### RECOGNIZING THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION "A MESSAGE OF PEACE"

#### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2000

Mrs. CAPP. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate and to call my colleagues' attention to an important exhibition that is taking place this week and month in Santa Barbara, California—the "Message of Peace" Hiroshima/Nagasaki International Exhibition.

I want to warmly welcome and recognize the distinguished Japanese Delegation that has traveled to our Country to officially open the exhibition. I believe that the presence of this Delegation and the wisdom that their experience provides will foster many meaningful dialogues.

Due to the generous support of community organizations, this exhibit has been sponsored by the Santa Barbara Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. The exhibition seeks to preserve the memory of the tragic consequences of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the hope of strengthening our commitment to a more peaceful world. In addition to the artifacts and photos of the exhibit, the Foundation and other community groups have organized a series of events and exhibits that will reach countless people—young and old—with the Message of Peace.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by thanking the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation for its ceaseless commitment to peace. I am honored to represent the Foundation and the ideals its members stand for in Washington.

#### CHARLES SPITALE HONORED FOR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

#### HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Charles J. Spitale, who is retiring this month as the vice president and chief executive officer of AAA-Mid Atlantic.

Charlie has served the members of the AAA for 40 years. He began as a service counselor in 1960, worked his way up to the position of office manager, and eventually was

promoted to the position of executive vice president with the former Valley Auto Club. Upon the merger with AAA Mid-Atlantic in 1996, he was appointed vice president and CEO.

He has also served for many years on the AAA Board of Directors and the Finance Committee of the AAA Federation. Charlie has also received numerous awards as a member of several Pennsylvania AAA Federation committees, and he has received national recognition from AAA in the area of sales production and promotion. He was also instrumental in facilitating the merger of the Tourist Promotion Agencies of Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to his accomplishments on the job, Charlie has a long and distinguished history with the Kiwanis Club of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He joined the club in 1966, serving as its 56th president from 1974 to 1975 and its secretary from 1987 to 1988. During his year as president, the club completed several outstanding community service projects as well as a variety of activities for Kiwanians and their families.

Under his leadership, the club's primary fundraising project during that year was a performance by the world-famous Yugoslavian dance ensemble, the Frula, which means "flute" in Slovenian. This and other fundraising allowed the club to assist not only the Kiwanis Charitable Foundation, but also for the Kingston Senior Citizens' Center, Camp Acahela of the Penns Mountains Boy Scout Council and the Wyoming Valley Cerebral Palsy Association.

Last but certainly not least, Charlie also founded the club's High-Rise Tree Trim Project in 1972 and chaired it for 26 years.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the numerous accomplishments and good deeds of Charles Spitale, and I wish him the best in his retirement.

#### UNESCO'S NEW SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS CONGRESS—NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE UNITED STATES TO REJOIN

##### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 7, 2000*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to invite my colleagues in the Congress to join me in welcoming to Capitol Hill today His Excellency Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Mr. Matsuura—a distinguished Japanese diplomat who formerly served as Deputy Foreign Minister of Japan, who is a graduate of Haverford College in Pennsylvania, and who served for a time at the Japanese Embassy here in Washington—assumed the leadership of UNESCO last fall. Under his leadership the organization has made remarkable progress in dealing with many of the criticisms that have been leveled at UNESCO in the past.

UNESCO was established in 1945, at the same time the United Nations itself was cre-

ated. Under terms of its charter, the organization is "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations."

For valid and sound reasons the United States withdrew from membership in UNESCO in 1984, along with the United Kingdom and Singapore. At that time the organization suffered from mismanagement at the highest levels, and some of its leadership urged a poorly-conceived scheme to establish a "new international information order" which appeared to many to be no more than an attempt to regulate the press. I supported the decision of our government to withdraw from membership.

Since 1984, UNESCO has made important changes to address the criticisms leveled by the United States and other nations. Under the leadership of Director General Federico Mayor Zaragoza of Spain a number of essential changes were made. In 1993 the General Accounting Office conducted an extensive review of UNESCO's efforts to implement changes to solve the problems cited by the United States in our decision to withdraw from the organization. That report concluded that the leadership of UNESCO has demonstrated a commitment to management reform. Britain rejoined UNESCO in 1997. Now under the leadership of Mr. Matsuura, further fundamental management reforms are being made.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the transformation of UNESCO, I introduced legislation earlier in this Congress directing the President to develop a strategy to bring the United States back into full and active participation in UNESCO. My legislation, H.R. 1974, recognizes the important contribution which the organization can make in constructing "the defenses of peace" against intolerance and incitements to war.

It is important for the United States to participate in UNESCO. We can make significant contributions in shaping and implementing the worthy goals of this organization. The legislation I have introduced, Mr. Speaker, recognizes the cost implications of our participation in UNESCO and that is why it directs the President and Secretary of State to develop a strategy for our returning to full membership.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that we are not now active members of this organization. I invite my colleagues to join me—not only in welcoming His Excellency Director General Koichiro Matsuura here to Capitol Hill—but in cosponsoring H.R. 1974 to bring the United States back into full participation in UNESCO.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 7, 2000*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably absent on a matter of critical importance and missed the following votes:

On H.R. 4884 (rollcall No. 451), to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 West 2nd Street in Royal Oak, Michigan as the "William S. Broomfield Post Office Building," introduced by the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, I would have voted "yea."

On H.R. 4484 (roll No. 452), to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 500 North Washington Street in Rockville, Maryland, as the "Everett Alvarez, Jr. Post Office Building," introduced by the gentlelady from Maryland, Mrs. MORELLA, I would have voted "yea."

On H.R. 4448 (roll No. 453), to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3500 Dolfield Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "Judge Robert Bernard Watts, Sr. Post Office Building," introduced by the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. CUMMINGS, I would have voted "yea."

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 7, 2000*

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to other commitments, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows: On July 27, 2000, Rollcall vote No. 450, on the Social Security Benefits Tax Relief, I would have voted "yea." Rollcall vote No. 449, on Agreeing to the Pomeroy Amendment, I would have voted "nay."

#### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

##### HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 7, 2000*

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, last month marked the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The federal government commemorated this historic milestone through many activities—from President Clinton announcing new proposals to make it easier for Social Security disability beneficiaries to contribute to the workforce without losing their benefits, to the House approving the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, to the opening of a new exhibit that examines the history of the disability rights movement at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

These activities are a long overdue symbol of federal commitment to individuals with disabilities. And to build on this momentum I would like to submit the eloquent testimony of Mr. Elmer Bartels, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, regarding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.